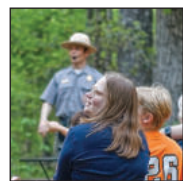




Greenbelt Biota outing, p.9



Greenbelt Park campfire, p.16

Police Chief, Council Discuss License Plate Readers, Concerns

by Larry Beyna

One prominent item generating much discussion at the April 13 Greenbelt City Council meeting was the response to the Greenbelt Resistance Network's (GRN) March 2 petition regarding the city's License Plate Reader Camera (LPR) systems and related policies.

Having submitted 11 questions to council about the cameras with no response, GRN then sent the questions in a petition signed by about 115 people. At the meeting Greenbelt Police Chief Richard Bowers responded.

Christine Wilkin spoke for GRN's 100+ members, raising concerns about the city's purchase



PHOTO BY CAROL GRIFFITH

A license plate reader camera on Cherrywood Lane

of 14 LPRs in 2025 for over \$175,000. According to Bowers the police department proposed in 2024 to spend about \$174,000 for 16 LPRs at 12 sites, with associated infrastructure, which

See **COUNCIL**, page 10

Election 2026

Four District 4 Candidates Address Democratic Club

by Lesley Kash

Four candidates for Maryland's 4th Congressional District seat in the U.S. House of Representatives spoke in a candidate forum on April 19 sponsored by the Eleanor and Franklin Roosevelt Democratic Club.

Joseph Gomes, Shavonne Hedgepeth, Jakeya Johnson and Jonathan White will compete in the Democratic primary on June 23. Candidates Khyre Edwards, Anthony Field and incumbent Glenn Ivey did not appear.

Forum Format

The candidates took questions previously submitted by audience members. Moderator and club

member Pat Wickersty organized and combined the questions by topic. Each candidate answered every question, rotating speaker order.

Candidate Intros

Gomes is a social worker and small business owner, focused on issues affecting working-class families, including the cost of food, health and housing. Having experienced life as an immigrant, Gomes wants to serve his community. "My children attend Roosevelt High School. The entire area needs to be a safe environment for kids."

Hedgepeth, working for Wash-

ington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority in capital planning, helps manage multi-billion-dollar public investments and interacts with the federal government on funding infrastructure. Prince George's County was hit hardest by federal cuts, she said, and now it is time for proactive planning to rebuild and strengthen.

Johnson, an administrator and union steward at a philanthropic nonprofit, recommended collaboration with communities, who know what they need. "Often decisions are reactions made after the fact," she said, "and that

See **ELECTION**, page 11

What Goes On

Monday, April 27

7:30 p.m., City Council Meeting: First Hearing Concerning the Proposed Budget for FY 2026-2027, Municipal Building

Wednesday, April 29

7:30 p.m., Council Budget Worksession: Public Safety, Springhill Lake Rec Center

See the city ad on page 5 or the meetings calendar at greenbeltnmd.gov for more information.



PHOTO BY MICHAEL HARTMAN

Democratic candidates from left to right: Joseph Gomes, Shavonne Hedgepeth, Jakeya Johnson and Jonathan White

Small Dogwood for News Review Giant

by Erica Johns and Sandra Lange

On Monday, April 13, members of the Greenbelt News Review and City of Greenbelt Horticulture Crew gathered to replace a memorial tree for Elaine Skolnik Nicholson, longtime News Review reporter, news editor and board president. This article is based on Sandra Lange's 2021 obituary of Elaine (see January 21, 2021 News Review), which noted, "Perhaps no single Greenbelt figure has been as influential in the News Review's history over more than six decades than Elaine Ruth Skolnik Nicholson." Elaine and her husband and board president Al Skolnik led the News Review through the years-long legal battle when it was sued in 1965 for libel.

Elaine's pink and Al's white memorial dogwood trees are on the grassy bank between the Community Center parking lot outside the News Review office and the Roosevelt Center parking lot. Elaine's original tree died after being vandalized, and the News Review board coordinated with the city to replace it.

Early Days

Elaine and Al moved to Greenbelt with their children in 1952.



PHOTO BY ERIC ZHANG

Elaine Skolnik Nicholson

She remembered how she fell in love with Greenbelt. "Oh, those tall pines and oaks, the lake, the large green areas, the playgrounds. ... It was such a sweet life." Al's full-time job was chief of inter-program statistics at the Social Security Administration, but Elaine said his dream job was to be a journalist. She claimed she had no talent for writing.

When they began working with the News Review, Al focused on hard news about Greenbelt Homes, Inc. and the city council, and Elaine helped write the Our

Neighbors column. Not long afterward, she saw a moving van in her court. The main Our Neighbors columnist was departing, and Elaine nervously became "it."

Anguish and Recognition

In 1965 the newspaper and Al were sued for \$2,000,000 for libel by local developer Charles Bresler, who charged that the paper had published defamatory remarks made by residents at a city council meeting. Thus began a four-year legal battle where lower courts awarded Bresler \$17,500 in damages, which was upheld in Maryland's highest court. With pro bono representation from Washington Post attorneys, the U.S. Supreme Court vindicated the News Review in a 1970 landmark unanimous Freedom of the Press decision. The legal battle impacted Al's and Elaine's private lives. Meanwhile they were assisting the lawyers and raising funds to cover court costs in case they lost again. The anguish was long lasting.

In 1974, Al and Elaine were named Greenbelt Outstanding Citizens, for which News Review

See **SKOLNIK**, page 11

Earth Day

County Recycling Center Gets Major Upgrade, Recycles More

by Janice Wolf



PHOTO BY JANICE WOLF

Sorted and baled bundles of paper, aluminum, tin and steel, and HDPE (also known as resin #2) are ready to be marketed and sold, on bid, by the Maryland Environmental Service marketing department.

The good news is, #7 plastics can be recycled in Greenbelt; the bad news is, those small single serving coffee pods cannot, nor can chip or snack bags, wire coat hangers or metal wreath frames. But a surprising number of other everyday items can be placed in residents' recycling bins curbside or in the city's collection containers around town and may eventually see new life as fabrics, flooring, insulation and more, thanks in part to significant upgrades at the Prince George's County Materials Recycling Facility (MRF) in Capitol Heights, where the city takes its recycling.

The MRF

The nearly eight-story tall facility, which sorts, separates and bales Greenbelt's recycled matter, has seen a 90 percent upgrade to its equipment since 2021, said Michael Bell, senior lead operations manager. The county has spent \$7 million on the plant in the last five years, and will spend another \$2 million this year, to include enhancing a live-feed camera system, he said.

The facility was built in 1993 and was previously operated by Waste Management, Inc. Since 2015 it has been operated by

See **RECYCLING**, page 8

Thanks for All the News

The Greenbelt News Review is a grateful recipient of a grant from the Greenbelt Community Foundation, one purpose of which is to allow us to print more pages than ad revenue supports. This week, thanks to that grant we are able to provide our readers with 16 pages of news, events and photos. Our thanks to the Foundation.

Letters to the Editor

SAYT Is Saving Us

I just wanted to share that my wife and I are enjoying a 70 percent trash cost reduction over the maximum sticker price. The SAYT program gave us the incentive to really think about and properly use our recycling. We joined the composting program where they come and pick up our compost each trash day.

When we leave town, we can email the composting crew and put it on hold. The compost crew then does not have to make a special trip up to our house and they give us a credit for each week that we do not have the compost picked up, absolutely perfect! The compost crew even emails us when they have picked up our compost bin, so wonderful when we are out of town or away.

We use an eight-gallon trash bag every two weeks and sometimes maybe three weeks. The bags are strong enough that you can compress them with your feet in order to put more trash in the bag. The program has worked out well for us and I hope it's doing the same for others. I really want to recommend that people take a look at their composting and their recycling as we realized some of our trash could've gone into the recycling bin, which has now been

corrected. Thank you to Green ACES and the city for putting this entire program together.

Mark Gordon

Speed Camera Inquiry

A review of the stop sign camera enforcement design clearly shows that there has been a needed increase in the center of Greenbelt, especially near Greenbelt Elementary School and that is a great improvement. However, there is a disturbing trend in Greenbelt West that must be challenged.

Greenbelt West has three stop sign enforcement cameras; two within two blocks of one another on Cherrywood Lane and one on Edmonston Road.

The question for me is why three more speed cameras have been placed in Greenbelt West and no additional cameras in Greenbelt East.

This reminds me of Ferguson, Mo., where African American residents bore a financial burden that was not equally shared with the entire city. The residents of Greenbelt West have taken on a greater financial burden than any other section in Greenbelt. Why is that? This action does not show

See **LETTERS**, page 12



Greenbelt Cinema
129 Centerway
301-329-2034
www.greenbeltcinema.org

Members always \$7.00!
Member kids are always FREE!

After 5 PM: adults \$10, kids \$7,
senior/student/military \$9

Before 5 PM:
general admission \$8, kids \$6

OC = Open Captions
CC = Closed Captions
DVS = Descriptive Video Service

SHOWTIMES:
APRIL 24th - 30th

Michael (PG-13)
(CC) (DVS) (2026) (127 mins)
Screen 1 - Main Auditorium
Fri. 5:00 PM, 8:00 PM
Sat. 5:00 PM, 7:50 PM
Sun. 12:00 PM (OC), 6:45 PM
Tue. 2:45 PM
Wed. 7:00 PM
Screen 2 - The Screening Room
Mon. 2:00 PM, 5:00 PM
Thurs. 3:45 PM

The Stranger
(NR) (2025) (122 mins)
French with English subtitles
Screen 1 - Main Auditorium
Mon. 2:15 PM
Thurs. 5:00 PM
Screen 2 - The Screening Room
Fri. 7:45 PM
Sat. 5:15 PM
Sun. 3:30 PM
Tue. 5:35 PM
Wed. 4:15 PM

The Christophers (R)
(CC) (DVS) (2025) (100 mins)
Screen 1 - Main Auditorium
Mon. 5:15 PM (OC)
Thurs. 8:00 PM
Screen 2 - The Screening Room
Fri. 5:15 PM
Sat. 8:10 PM
Sun. 7:00 PM
Tue. 3:00 PM
Wed. 7:15 PM

RAZZ (the) Documentary - Director's Cut Redux
Post-screening Q&A with an after party at the New Deal Café from 6-8p
Screen 1 - Main Auditorium
Sun. 3:00 PM

APRIL 30TH IS ADOPT A SHELTER PET DAY

PETE REPPERT



NO MATTER HOW LONG THEY KEEP ME HERE, I'LL NEVER RAT ON YOU, FLUFFY.

- News Review, April 29, 2021

Story & Photograph Submissions

We welcome your stories and photographs about all things Greenbelt. While publication is not guaranteed, your submissions help us cover more of what goes on. Stories will be copyedited. Remember to include captions and identify people in photographs. See the information box on this page for publication deadlines and how to submit materials.

Letters Policy

Deadline for letters is 6 p.m. Monday. Submission does not guarantee publication. Letters should be no longer than 300 words (shorter letters are more likely to be published).

Letters may be edited for clarity, grammar, civility and space constraints. The News Review may add a comment from the editor if deemed necessary.

All letters must include the letter writer's name, physical address, and telephone number. Only the name will be published; the News Review will consider requests for the name to be withheld.

Greenbelt News Review

AN INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER

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Mary Lou Williamson, Editor

Anna Bedford-Dillow, Managing Editor

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PUBLICATION DEADLINES:

- Monday 2 p.m. Articles/photos over 700 words, Display ads (not camera ready).

- Monday 6 p.m. All letters to the editor (300 word limit).

- Tuesday 2 p.m. Articles/photos under 700 words, photographs not associated with a story.

- Tuesday 5 p.m. Co-op dropbox: Classified ads with payment only.

- Tuesday 6 p.m. Classified ads and camera-ready display ads.

- Email submission is available. Hardcopy submissions (delivered by respective deadline) may be mailed to the address above or left in the Co-op grocery store drop box or GNR external office door mail slot, as shown below.

- Payment must accompany ads except by prior arrangement.

MAIL SUBSCRIPTION: \$55/year

Greenbelt Community Center at 15 Crescent Rd.

OFFICE HOURS: Monday and Tuesday, 2 - 4 p.m.

GNR external office door mail slot is located up a few stairs 25 yards left of the Community Center's east door near the Municipal Building.

St. Hugh Ladies of Charity Sponsor Birthday Party

by Mary Moien



Greenbelt's Ukulele Ladies entertain Sacred Heart Nursing Home residents with ukuleles and kazoos. From left are Mary Moien, Ellie Clark, JoEllen Sarff, Tara Wilcox and Lore Rosenthal.

For many years, St. Hugh Ladies of Charity have sponsored a birthday party for residents of Sacred Heart Nursing Home in Hyattsville. The most recent party was on April 14. This year Betty Timer and Jeanne Jacobs chaired the group that organized the party. They provided cupcakes for all and presents for the residents with birthdays. The group buys presents for the other residents too. Each person is given a gift bag with items such as stuffed animals, necklaces, socks, pens and paper. Often, the residents take everything out and spread the items on the table to see what goodies they have received. The Sew for Charity group that meets at the Community Center also quilted and crocheted lap robes that were given to the residents. The Ladies visit with the residents and encourage them to talk and reminisce. Entertainment was provided by Greenbelt's Ukulele Ladies strumming and singing older songs and encouraging residents to sing along.



Betty Timer delivers birthday gift bags to residents of Sacred Heart Nursing Home at the annual party.

- Photos by Barbara Ford

Six-week Mindfulness Meditation Practice

Rev. Mark Granfors-Hunt of Greenbelt Community Church is offering an introductory six-week Mindfulness Meditation practice entitled Mindfully Yours. This Introduction to Mindfulness series will introduce students to the calming, centering and enlivening experience of a daily Mindful Meditation practice. Each session will include a teaching on a particular topic of meditation, a time of mindful meditation practice on that topic and a time for questions. Participants will explore the practice of Mindful Meditation. Classes are scheduled for six consecutive Tuesday evenings beginning May 5 and ending on June 9, between 7 and 8 p.m. All class offerings will be via Zoom. These classes are being offered free of charge, and there will be a free will offering opportunity once the sessions have been completed. For more information or to enroll contact Mark at mgh.gbtl@gmail.com.

Crisis Hotline: 988

The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline dialing code is 988. Calls and text messages are confidential and free.

Obituaries

Russell Waugh



PHOTO COURTESY THE FAMILY

Russell Robert Waugh

Russell Robert Waugh, 70, died peacefully on Easter Sunday, April 5, 2026. He was born and raised in New Braintree, Mass., and early on developed an interest in astronomy. That became his life's passion. After graduating from North Brookfield High School, he went on to earn his bachelor's degree in astronomy from UMass, Amherst. He finished his schooling with a master's in education science at the University of Maryland.

Russell started his career at the Planetarium at the Worcester Science Center, went on to intern at the Hayden Planetarium in New York City, and spent 32 years as a teacher of science and astronomy at the Howard B. Owens Science Center in Prince George's County and as director of the Planetarium and the Challenger Program at the Science Center.

Russell had a brilliant mind and shared his expansive knowledge with thousands of school children throughout the years. He was a highly respected educator,

a gentle and kind man who will be missed by all who knew him.

He leaves his wife and soulmate of 40 years Carol (VanCamp) Waugh; sister Shirley (Kevin) Nimtz and her family, including Jason, Melissa and Gaby; and his wife's family Diana (Bill) Reiheld and Bob (Lana) VanCamp. He will be missed by his colleagues and friends at the Owens Science Center, the Greenbelt Astronomy Club and the Mowatt United Methodist Church. He was pre-deceased by his parents, Clifton and Jean, brother Kenneth, nephew David Nimtz, Gabrielle VanCamp and Richard VanCamp.

His final act was to donate his body to the Maryland State Board of Anatomy for research.

"And then our tears will dry, the sun will rise, the stars will shine, the moon will glow and the holes in our hearts will fill with happy memories of Russell and he will remain there forever," say his family.

Donations in his memory can be made to Mowatt Memorial United Methodist Church.



Our condolences to the family and many friends of Russell Waugh from his years with the Greenbelt Astronomy Club, the Mowatt United Methodist Church and the Howard B. Owens Science Center.

Send details of your news to editor@greenbeltnewsreview.com.



GCC Welcomes Rev. Aubra Love

Greenbelt Community Church, United Church of Christ, will hold a pastoral installation worship service to officially welcome its Senior Pastor, the Rev. Aubra Love, on Sunday, April 26 at 2 p.m. The public is invited to attend. The church is located at 1 Hillside Road.

"Among the greatest of all services that can possibly be rendered by man to Almighty God is the education and training of children." – 'Abdu'l-Bahá



Greenbelt Bahá'í Community

www.greenbeltbahais.org

CATHOLIC COMMUNITY OF GREENBELT

Mass Sundays at 10:00 a.m.
Community Center Room 114
15 Crescent Rd

cathcomgreenbelt.org
ALL ARE WELCOME!

A Roman Catholic
Intentional Eucharistic
Community

OR - Join us on ZOOM!
For ZOOM link:
CCGI985+owner@groups.io

St. John's Episcopal Church
11040 Baltimore Avenue, Beltsville, MD 20704
301-937-4292 www.saintjohnsbeltsville.org

Welcomes you each Sunday for
Worship & Sunday School
at 10:00 AM

Mishkan Torah Congregation

10 Ridge Road, Greenbelt, MD 20770
Rabbi Saul Oresky, Cantor Yael Fischman

A welcoming, inclusive, and friendly
synagogue offers something for everyone:
young, old, single, married, and
both Jewish and interfaith families.

Services at 8:00pm Friday and
9:45am Saturday in person and on Zoom

For more information, visit MishkanTorah.org or call 301-474-4223
A Dual-Affiliated Reconstructionist and Conservative congregation

10 Ridge Rd, Greenbelt, MD 20770



Paint Branch Unitarian Universalist Church

Postal address: P.O. Box 676, Laurel, MD 20725
Phone: 301-937-3666 www.pbuuc.org



Welcomes you to our open, nurturing community



April 26, 2026, at 3 p.m.

The Blessings of a Grateful Heart

Rev. Karen Lee Scrivo with Worship Associate Anne Hoover

In the spirit of this month's theme of Thanks, we'll explore how practicing gratitude can transform our lives as well as those around us.

Streaming on PBUUC's Facebook page, on Zoom, and in person. Worship service held at University Christian Church, 6800 Adelphi Road, Hyattsville, MD

Obituaries

The News Review publishes obituaries of Greenbelt residents, past or present. You write it or we will if you prefer. We try to include information about participation in various activities and organizations, where the person lived and something about the family. A photograph and service information should be included. There is no charge.

Mowatt Memorial United Methodist Church

40 Ridge Road, Greenbelt
Open hearts, Open Minds, Open doors

Find us on Facebook: facebook.com/mowattumc
301-474-5410

Pastor Evelyn Romero

Worship Service, Sundays 9:30 - 10:30 a.m.
Let's party! Celebrations from the Bible.



We Are an Open and
Affirming Church

**GREENBELT
COMMUNITY
CHURCH**

One Hillside Road

Join Us Sunday
10:15 AM for Worship

www.greenbeltcommunitychurch.org

Rev. Aubra Love,
Senior Pastor

ST. HUGH OF GRENABLE CATHOLIC CHURCH

- Daily Mass: Mon-Fri 7:15am*, Sat 9am*
- Sunday Mass:
 - Sat vigil 5pm*
 - Sun 8am, 9:30am, 11am
- Confessions Saturday 3pm - 4pm.

Masks for the unvaccinated encouraged.

CELEBRATE WITH US

135 Crescent Rd.

www.sthughofgrenoble.org

*Live
streamed
on
Facebook
and
available
on our
YouTube
page later.





City Information & Events

The strength of Greenbelt is diverse people living together in a spirit of cooperation. We celebrate all people. By sharing together all are enriched. We strive to be a respectful, welcoming community that is open, accessible, safe and fair.

GREENBELT CITY CALENDAR

Be sure to check out the City calendar for all up to date events at www.greenbeltmd.gov/calendar.



* VOLUNTEER * VACANCIES * APPLY FOR A COMMITTEE OR BOARD TODAY!

Volunteering for City of Greenbelt Committees & Boards is an excellent opportunity to engage with your community and make a difference. Choose from a number of committees & boards such as the Advisory Committee on Education, Advisory Committee on Trees, Arts Advisory Board, Board of Appeals, Community Relations Advisory Board, Ethics Commission, Forest Preserve Advisory Board, Greenbelt Advisory Committee on Environmental Sustainability, Park and Recreation Advisory Board, or Youth Advisory Committee and make a difference in Greenbelt!

Take the first step towards making a positive impact and apply for one of these committee vacancies today!
Call (301) 474-8000.

ARTS HAPPENINGS

Visit www.greenbeltmd.gov/arts for more information and many other opportunities!

Sign up for ARTFANS, a weekly e-newsletter, at www.greenbeltmd.gov/list.aspx.

Art Studio Open House & Sale! Sunday, May 3; 1-4pm (Greenbelt Community Center)
Tour the studios of our Artists in Residence at the Greenbelt Community Center and see their latest creations! Several participating artists will have works available for purchase. Enjoy demonstrations with Greenbelt Recreation teaching artists and a free all-ages craft workshop starting at 1pm, 2pm, and 3pm. More information at www.greenbeltmd.gov/arts.

Friends & Family Workshop: Felted Spring Garland
4/24; 6-7:30pm (Greenbelt Community Center). This workshop is great for participants of all ages, and no experience is necessary! Adults and teens ages 12+ can learn to needle felt 2-dimensional shapes. Children under 12 can cut out wool felt, or learn to make pom poms. Registration required: see page 13 of the spring activity guide for details - www.greenbeltmd.gov/activityguide.

MORE ARTS HAPPENING SOON

- May Artful Afternoons** 5/3, 1-4pm (Greenbelt Community Center). 5/10,1:30-2:30pm (Springhill Lake Recreation Center), including a mixer hosted by the Greenbelt Arts Advisory Board and a performance by ERHS dance students. Sign up here: sugeni.us/enFb
- Free Artist Talk with Tinam Valk** 5/15; 6-7pm (Greenbelt Community Center) RSVP at sugeni.us/e8So.
- Art Share** 5/15; 7-8pm (Greenbelt Community Center) rsvp at sugeni.us/ekEO.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

In the City of Greenbelt, we remain committed to embracing and celebrating the diversity of all. As our nation undergoes change, feelings of pride, uncertainty, and even fear may arise. Yet, we stand firm in the pledge that has defined Greenbelt since its inception and will not falter.

Learn more at <https://www.greenbeltmd.gov/government/know-your-rights-immigration-resources>.

FY2027 Budget Work Sessions at a Glance

OVERVIEW FROM APRIL 20 BUDGET WORK SESSION

The City Council held a budget work session focused on Greenbelt Cares, Greenbelt Cinema, and miscellaneous grants.

Council members expressed support for both programs but noted the need to balance budget constraints across all city services. Public comment included testimonials about the importance of both the nursing program and cinema, with residents emphasizing their significant community impact.

CARES

Dr. Park and Crystal Batey from Greenbelt Cares discussed the challenges facing their program due to the loss of ARPA funding, which will affect two positions totaling approximately \$150,000 annually.

The team proposed creating a 501c3 organization to pursue additional grants and exploring insurance billing options for their services.

Greenbelt Cinema

Greenbelt Cinema's Dr. McGrath presented a detailed budget overview showing ongoing financial challenges, including a \$40,000 deficit, while highlighting their expanded programming and community outreach efforts.

The cinema operates with minimal staff and relies heavily on grants, including \$75,000 from the city.

MEETINGS FOR APRIL 27 - MAY 1

Tuesday, April 28 at 3:30 pm, **SENIOR CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE - Greenbelt Community Center, On the Agenda: Approval of March Meeting Minutes, Discussion of the Not For Seniors Only Open Forum**

Tuesday, April 28 at 7 pm, **ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION - Virtual, On the Agenda: Planning for Student Awards (5/20), College and Career resources - Troi**

Tuesday, April 28 at 6 pm, **BOARD OF ELECTIONS - Virtual**

Tuesday, April 28 at 7:30 pm, **ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY (GREEN ACES) - Virtual, On the Agenda: TBD**

Wednesday, April 29 at 7:30 pm, **BUDGET WORK SESSION - PUBLIC SAFETY - Springhill Lake Recreation Center**

In advance, the hearing impaired are advised to use MD RELAY at 711 to submit your questions/comments or contact the City Clerk at (301) 474-8000 or email banderson@greenbeltmd.gov. This schedule is subject to change. For confirmation that a meeting is being held call (301) 474-8000. For information on public participation for the meetings above, visit the meetings calendar at www.greenbeltmd.gov/calendar.

GREENBELT CITY COUNCIL - REGULAR MEETING

Monday, April 27 at 7:30 pm

ORGANIZATION

- Call to Order
- Roll Call
- Meditation and Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag
- Reading of the Greenbelt Community Pledge
- Petitions and Requests
- Consent Agenda
- Meetings
- Committee Reports
- Reappointment to Advisory Board/Committee
- Approval of Agenda and Additions

COMMUNICATIONS

- Presentations
 - * Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month
 - * Autism Awareness and Acceptance Month Proclamation
 - * National Poetry Month Proclamation
 - * Public Hearing - FY2027 Proposed Budget
 - * LimnoTech Final Presentation
- Minutes
 - * Statement of Record — Closed Session, April 8, 2026
 - * Statement of Record — Closed Session, April 20, 2026
- Administrative Reports

LEGISLATION

- A Resolution of the City Council of Greenbelt, Maryland, Proposing an Amendment to the City Charter to Establish Collective Bargaining Rights for Certain Eligible, Non-Exempt, Non-Managerial and Non-Confidential City Employees
- 1st Reading

OTHER BUSINESS

- Authorization for City Manager to Approve Contract with T-Mobile for Fleetwide Telematics
- Authorization for City Manager to Approve Purchase of Replacement Mowing Equipment and Reallocation of Funds
- Council Reports
- Approval of the Council Planning Framework
- Discussion Item: Proposed FY2027 Budget
- Council Activities

In advance, the hearing impaired is advised to use MD RELAY at 711 to submit your questions/comments or contact the City Clerk at (301) 474-8000 or email banderson@greenbeltmd.gov.

This agenda is subject to change. For the most up-to-date agenda, visit www.greenbeltmd.gov/municipalTV or call (301) 474-8000.

A majority (or quorum) of Greenbelt City Council members may attend community organization meetings, but no official Council action will be taken at these meetings. Please note that meeting locations may change after being published. For information on how to join these meetings, contact the respective organization directly.

FY2027 Budget Work Session Schedule

The Greenbelt City Council will hold a series of work sessions throughout April and May to review and discuss the FY2027 Proposed Budget with City staff. Community members are encouraged to tune in or attend to learn more about upcoming plans and priorities for our city.

Join us in person at 25 Crescent Road, or virtually via YouTube, the Greenbelt website at www.greenbeltmd.gov/municipalTV livestream, Zoom, or on Verizon and Comcast cable channels.

View the full schedule of upcoming work session dates below:

- (April 27) 1st Public Hearing
- (April 29) Budget Work Session - Public Safety
- (May 4) Budget Work Session - Green Ridge House
- (May 6) Budget Work Session - Recognition Groups (Group 1)
- (May 11) 2nd Public Hearing
- (May 13) Budget Work Session - Recognition Groups (Group 2)
- (May 18) Budget Work Session - Final Budget Review
- (May 26) Budget Adoption

OFFICIAL NOTICE - PUBLIC HEARING

The Greenbelt City Council has scheduled a public hearing to be held during the Regular Meeting of Council **Monday, April 27, 2026 at 7:30 pm**

CONCERNING THE PROPOSED BUDGETS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2026-2027 FOR THE GENERAL FUND AND EACH OF THE OTHER FUNDS OF THE CITY.

This is the first of two Public Hearings on the budget. The second will be held on Monday, May 11, 2026. The Public Hearing will be held in person at the Municipal Building and virtual via Zoom. Public attendance and participation are encouraged. All residents of Greenbelt will have a reasonable opportunity to provide written and oral comments and ask questions concerning the entire budget. Copies of the proposed budget may be examined at the City Offices, 25 Crescent Rd., during normal operating hours. The proposed budget is also posted on the City Web site at <http://www.greenbeltmd.gov>. For more information, please call 301-474-8000.

- Bonita Anderson, City Clerk

EARTH DAY KAYAK CLEANUP

Saturday, April 25 from 10 am - 1 pm
Buddy Attick Lake Park, 555 Crescent Rd

In partnership with Venture Crew 746 and the Greenbelt Rotary Club, volunteers will work with City staff to remove debris from the lake and plant along the shoreline to support a healthier local ecosystem.

Use the QR code to sign up in advance.



SERVSAFE FOOD CERTIFICATION COURSE (NEW) Thursdays, May 7, 14, 21, and 28 from 6-9 pm

Greenbelt Community Center, 15 Crescent Road

Sharpen your food safety knowledge and earn your ServSafe Certification with this comprehensive, instructor-led course. ServSafe is the leading food safety training and certification program from the National Restaurant Association, offering certification for food service professionals to prevent food-borne illness and meet health regulations.

Class #: 257201-1

Register today via RecTrac, by emailing tgreen@greenbeltmd.gov, or in person at the Greenbelt Community Center.

2ND ANNUAL TOUCH-A-TRUCK

Saturday, May 2 from 11 am - 2 pm

Beltway Plaza, 6000 Greenbelt Rd, Parking lot behind AMC

Join us on Saturday, May 2 from 11 am to 2 pm for Greenbelt's 2nd Annual Touch-A-Truck at Beltway Plaza! Bring the whole family for a hands-on day of big trucks, games, activities, and plenty of fun. Climb aboard real vehicles, enjoy music, food, and a lively atmosphere, plus prizes and giveaways throughout the event. This free, all-ages event takes place in the parking lot behind AMC at 6000 Greenbelt Road.

FREE VISION & HEARING SCREENINGS

May 5 from 10am - 1 pm

Greenbelt Community Center, Ground Floor East

GAIL presents **Once Upon A Greenbelt!** This event is for Greenbelt Residents only.

The GAIL program, in partnership with the Lions Club, is providing free vision and hearing screenings for parents and children in elementary and middle school.

Use the QR code and fill out a form to register.



UPCOMING FREE PROGRAMS

The City of Greenbelt is happy to provide the following programs **FREE** of charge. For more information, visit www.greenbeltmd.gov/calendar.

- **SENIOR TECH CAFE** Sunday, April 26, 1 - 3 pm. Tech support is available for seniors with questions about phones, computers, and more.
- **STRONGER EVERY YEAR - A HEALTHY AGING AND PREVENTION FAIR** Thursday, May 28, 1-4 pm. Featuring Reflexology, Memory Screenings, Journaling, and more.
- **THE PINK PANTRY** Wednesday, June 10, 9:30 am - 4 pm: Provides free menstrual and hygiene products to Greenbelt residents.
- **MEMORY CAFE** May 6 and May 20 at 1: 30 pm - Greenbelt Community Center, Ground Floor East.

City Council Discusses Revenue, Expenditures; Hruby to Retire

by Erik Hanson

The Greenbelt City Council will hold eight worksessions this spring, each reviewing portions of the Fiscal Year (FY) 2027 budget. The April 8 worksession reviewed Planning and Community Development, General Government, Non-departmental Funds and the Funds Transfer sections of the FY 2027 budget.

City Treasurer Ronald Covington gave an overview of anticipated revenue (\$41,748,100, up 3.92 percent from FY 2026) and expenditures (\$41,741,200, up 3.96 percent from FY 2026). There are decreases in revenue due to the lower interest payments, lower cable revenue and the end of federal American Rescue Plan Act funding. But there are increases coming from new revenue from stop sign cameras and a Public Utilities tax rate increase.

Covington noted that the largest increase in expenditures comes from personnel costs which are up \$2,177,500 or 7.7 percent. The increase in personnel costs is due to cost-of-living and merit increases.

City Manager Josué Salmerón noted that the budget includes two five-year forecasts. The first scenario shows that the city will run out of money in 2031 if no interventions are made in terms of raising revenue or cutting costs.

A broader discussion took place considering longer-term

ways to raise revenue or cut costs.

On the cost-cutting side, Salmerón noted that the current health insurance is underutilized. Lower cost health insurance plans could save money for both the city and the employee. The city's solar farm was discussed as a way to cut costs, but it might not significantly offset rising energy costs.

Salmerón's suggestions to increase revenue included 1) making a case to bring a greater share of income tax and sales tax to Greenbelt, 2) economic development especially around Beltway Plaza and Metro and 3) gaining income from other assets the city has already invested in such as the Schrom Hills athletic fields, Buddy Attick Park and the Aquatic Center. There was also a suggestion of limiting tax abatements, although Salmerón noted that the legal costs could offset any money saved from limiting abatements.

Terri Hruby, director of Planning and Community Development, noted her department's ongoing projects including the Vision Zero Initiative and the Hanover Parkway bicycle facility. There was a discussion of increasing the \$100 fine charged to landlords who fail to notify the city about evictions. Hruby will be retiring after 32 years working for the department.

Patuxent Research Refuge Holds May Activities

The featured art at the John Hollingsworth Art Gallery will be a photo exhibition from May 1 through 30 by Nishanth Sunny, an associate professor at the University of Maryland. The theme of the exhibition is Nature's Wonders - Let's Preserve Them!

Prints from the exhibit are available for purchase. They will be available for pickup from the gift shop starting June 3. All of the proceeds go to benefit the mission of the Friends of Patuxent.

During the exhibition the following activities for kids between 4 and 12 years of age are planned at the Patuxent National Wildlife Visitor Center, 10901 Scarlet Tanager Loop.

Saturday, May 9, 11 a.m. to noon: Dennis Hartnett, Patuxent volunteer, will lead an interactive program titled Wolves and Other Predators.

Saturday, May 16, 11 a.m. to noon: Barrie Hershkowitz, Patuxent volunteer, will lead an interactive program titled Monarch Butterflies and their Magical Migration.

Saturday, May 23, 11 a.m. to noon: Diana Ogilvie, Patuxent volunteer, will lead an interactive nature walk highlighting common species of interest and their interactions with the nature around them.

GVFD to Hold Indoor Community Yard Sale

The Ladies Auxiliary of the Greenbelt Volunteer Fire Department will have an indoor community yard sale on Saturday, May 9 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the fire station, 125 Crescent Road. To make a table reservation or for further information, call Kathy at 301-351-7496. Food and beverage will be available for purchase.

Annual Montpelier Herbs, Tea, Arts Festival

The 2026 Montpelier Festival of Herbs, Tea & the Arts is on Saturday, April 25 from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. Welcome the sights and sounds of nature, art and history at this free festival for the entire family hosted by the Montpelier Historic Site & Museum and the Montpelier Arts Center in Laurel. Explore the vendor marketplace, attend a talk on gardening and herbs, tour the Museum and relax to live music. Beginning at 11 a.m., there will be outdoor performances featuring the Jane Austen Society of North America - Maryland Region, the Natyabhoomi School of Dance and Samaria Marley with a special guest. Visit the resident artists' studios at the Arts Center, watch art demonstrations, paint the Montpelier bird and create spring-themed crafts. Stroll the galleries and view the exhibitions of Amanda Spaid, Linda Bernard and the Laurel Art Guild. At 1 p.m., come to the main gallery for a free performance by classical guitarist Gwenth Aggeler.

This event is free to all ages and will be held rain or shine.



Art Studio Open House & Sale

The Greenbelt Recreation Arts Program will host an Art Studio Open House and Sale on Sunday, May 3 from 1 to 4 p.m. at the Community Center. Tour the studios of the center's eight artists in residence and mingle with Greenbelt Recreation arts instructors; several artists will have work available for purchase. Visit the art gallery and participate in free hands-on activities for all ages. See details as they are announced at greenbeltmd.gov/arts.

Laugh Out Loud Stations Closes At Beltway Plaza after 13 Years

by Laura Charleston



PHOTO COURTESY LOL STATIONS

Swinging Stars, a ride for toddlers at LOL Stations

After 16 years of business and serving the community for 13 years, Regina Bethea, owner of Laugh Out Loud Stations in Beltway Plaza, will retire on April 25. But the memories will continue, she says.

For many Prince George's County families, LOL Stations was more than an indoor amusement center. It was a gathering place where birthdays, field trips and family traditions took shape.

Since opening, the fun center built its identity around a simple philosophy, "fun for all and all for fun." Unlike many entertainment centers, it encouraged participation across generations, not just for children. "I think that's what makes LOL Stations different, adults typically don't play. And at LOL, they play. Everybody, the entire family, plays," said Bethea.

From laser tag to virtual reality attractions, the space became a rare all-in-one destination, prioritizing affordability. "We've been able to ensure that they had fun ... pretty much whatever income level," Bethea said.

Beyond Entertainment

Beyond entertainment, the business contributed to the local workforce and youth development. Numerous teenagers first learned the importance of professionalism

and customer service by gaining early work experience there.

"We have trained hundreds of teenagers. Most of them it's been their first job," said Bethea.

The center also served as a frequent destination for organized youth groups, hosting an estimated 300 daycares, camps and schools annually.

A Family Space

At its core, Bethea emphasized the emotional impact of creating a space where families could disconnect from daily stress. "It is the memories that we created that families are able to create when they come, seeing happy children, happy families," said Bethea.

In addition, Bethea had sought to bring live theater events and even childcare offerings to the shopping center. The September 28, 2023 News Review reported on the debut of family theater at LOL Stations. Then in December 2023 LOL Stations celebrated a \$50,000 American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) grant through the City of Greenbelt, with which they planned equipment upgrades, space renovations and more opportunities for fun family activities (see the May 16, 2024 issue). In 2024, plans for an LOL Childcare Center were also underway, but they were denied permits.

Farewell Tour

The closure comes amid broader shifts affecting the amusement and family entertainment industry, including declining attendance and changing consumer habits.

Throughout April, LOL Stations is hosting a Farewell Tour featuring weekly events and discounts leading up to its final day. The celebration includes themed Saturdays, discounted unlimited play and reunion-style gatherings for former guests and employees.

The final day, Saturday, April 25, will include discounts along with complimentary refreshments while supplies last.

"We just really want to thank the community for supporting us," Bethea said. "We couldn't have done it without you."

Laura Charleston is a University of Maryland student at the Philip Merrill College of Journalism interning with the Greenbelt News Review.



Registration Open For Peace Camp

Little Friends for Peace (LFFP) will hold its fifth annual Peace Camp at Greenbelt Community Church this July 20 to 24. Peace Camp is a week-long summer camp for children ages 5 to 14 to learn skills for cooperation, nonviolent communication, empathy and problem solving through Peace Circles, art, music, cooperative games, a Peace Museum and other peace tools. LFFP Co-Directors MJ and Jerry Park have led Peace Camps in Minnesota and the Washington, D.C. area annually since 1981.

In the past 10 years, LFFP has reached 3,700 children through more than 83 Peace Camps, and post-camp surveys have found a 40 percent increase in camper ability to resolve conflicts peacefully.

Information on registration, as well as applications for Peace Camp counselor and junior counselor positions (ages 15+), can be found at LFFP.org/peacecamp.

CONGRATULATIONS

Rev. Aubra Love

ON YOUR

Installation

as Senior Pastor

to

Greenbelt Community Church

United Church of Christ

Celebrate your journey and embrace your future

from your friends at GCC

Earth Day

As Data Centers Multiply in Region, Water Use Increases

by Whitney Pipkin



PHOTO BY DAVE HARP, BAY JOURNAL

Chilled-water storage tanks are seen on the side of a data center in Loudoun County, Va. Such systems are for backup cooling, according to the company’s website.

Northern Virginia is the global epicenter of data centers. Loudoun County, Va., is home to the highest concentration of data centers in the world. As Prince George’s County considers positioning itself as a possible next hub for data centers (see the March 12 News Review), Virginia’s experience tells us we need to consider water usage.

Perhaps you’ve read that ChatGPT, the most prominent artificial intelligence chatbot, consumes about one plastic bottle’s worth of water for every 100-word email it generates. But, as new Artificial Intelligence (AI) models emerge, the water consumption of the data centers that fuel AI multiplies. And the water, of course, doesn’t come from a store-bought bottle.

Water-cooling Needs

In Northern Virginia, which is home to the world’s largest concentration of data centers, the water comes from the Potomac River basin – a source that also supplies drinking water to residents before flowing to the Chesapeake Bay. Each new AI large language model that comes along now accounts for substantially more water consumption than its predecessor, and experts are predicting a future in which AI’s water-cooling needs could compete with the region’s other water needs, particularly on hot summer days.

Computer servers running non-stop inside these warehouse-like data centers generate heat. To keep them cool and running efficiently, most data centers use evaporative cooling systems. The systems use water to transport the heat out of the buildings into cooling towers. One researcher compared the process to the way sweat is emitted to help cool the human body.

While evaporative systems are the most common, air cooling (essentially air conditioning) is an option that uses less water but more electricity. Synthetic liquid cooling is also used at some specialized data centers. And, in Loudoun County, Va., some data centers use reclaimed water for cooling purposes.

Data Center Growth

The growth of data center construction in Virginia alone nearly doubled the demand for electricity from the region’s grid in the second half of 2024, but water consumption is harder to measure. Researchers are only beginning to understand the water use associated with data center growth.

Part of the problem is that very few of the facilities publicly report water use. And some of the water in question is reused or even returned to its source – though large amounts evaporate during the cooling process.

“Water demand and power demand have a linear growth right now, because [water] is the cheapest way to cool,” said Lauren Bridges, an assistant professor of media studies at the University of Virginia who studies the environmental impacts of data infrastructure.

Generally, the more energy intensive a data center is, the more heat its computers produce – and the more cooling water it consumes. That’s especially true in places where water is still an affordable and seemingly abundant resource, such as the Potomac River basin in Northern Virginia.

A widely cited study by Bluefield Research found that, in 2023, the vast majority of data centers in the world were using water as their primary form of cooling. Almost all of it was coming from local watersheds. Google’s own sustainability report noted that the company’s self-owned data centers alone withdrew nearly 8 billion gallons of water and consumed more than 6 billion gallons of freshwater for on-site cooling in 2023. Almost 80 percent of that water was drinkable, according to a University of California Riverside report focused on making data centers less “thirsty.”

Water Use Trend

Google’s water use increased by about 20 percent per year in recent years, an uptick the Bluefield report found was similar among other companies running data centers as more AI models came online. And the 2024 U.S. data center energy report from the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory projects that the 2023 water use numbers could double or even quadruple by 2028. The report said they could reach up to 74 billion gallons per year used by the sector if current trends continue, “further stressing the water infrastructures.”

Globally, the UC Riverside report found, AI’s water demands are projected to consume as much water as half of the United Kingdom by 2027. “This is concerning, as freshwater scarcity has become one of the most pressing challenges,” the report stated.

These global issues are coming
See DATA CENTERS, page 15

Council Approves New Standing Rules; Discusses Utility Tax, More

by Larry Beyna

The Greenbelt City Council met on April 13. Mayor Emmett Jordan was out of town so Mayor Pro Tem Kristen Weaver chaired the meeting.

Standing Rules

After several months of discussion and revisions, and after a first reading at the March 23 regular meeting, a “Resolution to Repeal and Reenact with Amendment Resolution Number 2109 to Adopt Standing Rules for the Council of the City of Greenbelt, Maryland” came up for second reading and adoption.

The changes initially proposed to the standing rules were previously hotly debated, as reported in the February 19 News Review. Those adopted include a new time limit of two hours for regular meetings, requiring a vote of the majority to extend in half hour increments after that; introducing comment cards and sign-in sheets that attendees may use; limiting people to speaking once on any given subject and for no more than three minutes; limiting council members to speaking twice and for no more than five minutes, without a majority vote; and setting the process for dealing with disorderly conduct, among other items.

No councilmembers had any comments about the resolution, but two residents did. Former mayor J Davis first asked when the amended standing rules would go into effect if adopted at this meeting. Weaver stated that she thought there was something about implementation in the amended standing rules, but wasn’t sure. As no specific time was found in the resolution, and it was apparently not of an urgent nature, the time for the amended standing rules to go into effect may wait at least 10 days (i.e., not before April 23.)

Davis also thanked council for keeping recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance at the beginning of every meeting in the standing rules. She did express concern, however, regarding a few other new rules, including the procedure for signing in to speak to an issue, be it at the meeting itself or participating on Zoom, and how a resident can ask to speak if spontaneous questions arise as a meeting progresses. Davis warned that, with some of these new rules, council was causing an “unacceptable restriction on public comment and participation.”

Weaver then called for a roll call vote on the resolution and it passed unanimously.

Utility Tax

Council conducted a public hearing on a Proposed Utility Tax Rate of \$2.50 for Fiscal Year 2027. City Manager Josué Salmerón began the hearing with the following information: A public utility tax would allow the city to tax the operating property of public utilities. The tax, which the utility companies – not city residents – would pay, would apply to land, buildings and other property, such as telephone poles, wires, etc. used by the utilities for their operations.

The proposed utility tax rate of \$2.50 per \$100 of assessed value for Greenbelt is slightly above the average. As Salmerón put it, the \$2.50 rate would be a revenue op-

portunity that would help Greenbelt with its budget pressures of the past few years. It would generate about \$110,000 in additional annual recurring revenue.

Geospatial Strategic Planning

Salmerón briefed council on the city administration staff’s completion of the Esri Geospatial Strategic Planning process. He also credited council for its review of the Administration Department’s Geographic Information System (GIS) strategy, which was developed during that process. The plan provides a framework for how Administration can use GIS tools and spatial data to improve coordination, decision-making and operational effectiveness.

The geospatial roadmap has seven goals: (1) Reduce isolating administrative silos and improve cross-department collaboration; (2) enable proactive data-driven government; (3) create a citywide integration of data and status information from many unconnected systems into one system for leadership; (4) improve constituent services and close the information loop between administrative actions and information received by residents; (5) increase transparency around projects, spending and progress; (6) support equitable, data-informed decision-making; and (7) strengthen public communication and engagement.

Greenbelt Crossing

Council also unanimously approved an Amended Declaration of Covenants for 7010 Greenbelt Road (the Greenbelt Crossing senior community currently under construction.) The revised covenants formalize approvals previously granted by council. Staff

had recommended approval of the revised agreement so that it could be recorded in the land records of Prince George’s County.

Other Council Actions

With approval of its “consent agenda,” council accepted new bylaws drafted and adopted in January by Greenbelt’s Advisory Planning Board; reappointed Janet Mirsky to the Advisory Committee on Education; accepted the resignation of Kim Kash from the Charter Review Committee; and authorized Salmerón to pay \$30,195.90 for 12 separately contracted CivicPlus services being billed together on a single invoice and previously approved by council in 2024.

Proclamations

Weaver read several proclamations: (a) designating the second week of April as National Public Safety Telecommunications Week to recognize the important role of communication personnel in the police and safety departments; (b) designating the week of April 12-18 as Animal Control Appreciation Week to honor the work of Greenbelt’s animal control officers and animal shelter; (c) recognizing Arbor Day (April 24) and its theme, Million Trees Project; and recognizing Earth Day (April 22) and its theme, Our Power, Our Planet.

Environmental Coordinator Kevin Carpenter-Driscoll accepted the Earth Day proclamation and gave an update on Greenbelt’s planned Earth Day celebration on Saturday, April 25 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Buddy Attick Park. Volunteers will work with Public Works staff and the Greenbelt Park Rangers to remove litter by canoe and kayak, and install native plants along the shoreline.

NEW DATE!

You Are Invited To

A Garden Party

at Mary Lou's Garden,
58 Lakeside Drive
or picket gate on Lake trail

Sunday, April 26 from 1 to 5 p.m.

RECYCLING continued from page 1

Maryland Environmental Service (MES), the nonprofit state business established by the General Assembly in 1970 for operational and technical services to protect Maryland's environment. MES operates more than 1,000 projects throughout the state, along with recycling and composting facilities and landfill sites such as the Brown Station Road Sanitary Landfill and the Prince George's County Yard Waste Composting Facility, both in Upper Marlboro.

GHI Tour

A group of volunteer court liaisons from Greenbelt Homes Inc. (GHI) recently toured the plant and witnessed a mind-blowingly complex labyrinth of crisscrossed and overlapping conveyor belts that feed all the bottles, cans and paper through magnetic, air and optical sorters, in an order designed to separate the materials into useable ingredients like polyvinyl chloride (PVC) or paper for pulp, which are then baled and sold by bid on a monthly basis. The plant processes 250 tons daily (a weight equivalent of 40 to 50 elephants), and more over the Christmas holiday season, Bell said.

The Process

Each day after the recycling is collected, Greenbelt's trucks drive directly to the MRF, are weighed, and then drive inside the building entrance to literally tip their loads onto, you guessed it, the tipping floor. It's easy to see that everything is commingled, from loose paper and cardboard to plastic, glass and metals. From there, a loader scoops up the material into a drum feeder that pushes it at a consistent rate into the facility, where the rest of the magic happens.

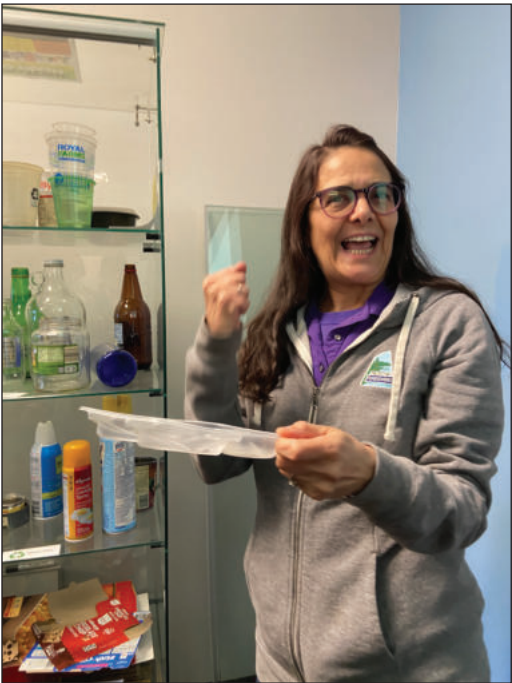
Early in the process, the materials run through a system that uses air and rotating rollers with gears to push lighter materials like paper and cardboard up, like popcorn, over and off to a different conveyor, while bulky and heavier items like cans and bottles fall through the rollers to another part of the system. The cardboard and paper are separated and dropped into giant bins called bunkers. Once the right amount by weight is met, the material is pressed into large rectangular bales, wrapped with wire and moved to storage awaiting sale at the end of the month.

The plastic, glass and metals are conveyed through a series of rotating metal magnets that pull out items containing steel or iron. So-called tin cans are often made of steel with a tin plating to prevent rust, and at the end of the process, steel and tin are baled together for sale.

Next Steps

The next steps employ air, mechanical and laser optical sorters that recognize the different plastic resins, and separate out the glass and aluminum. The first pulls out containers made of polyethylene terephthalate (PET), which residents recognize by the recycling or resin code #1. Next, the conveyor passes through a color optical sorter, followed by an eddy current that pushes out the lighter weight aluminum. That is followed by more optical sorters that recognize polypropylene (PP, resin code #5).

While materials are pulled from the stream by machines, people also work as a last line of defense to ensure nonrecyclables do not get through. Bell said



Greenbelt Recycling Coordinator Luisa Robles is ecstatic to learn that plastics with a resin code of 7, like this plastic lunch snack tray, can now be recycled through the program she runs for the city.



Below catwalks at the Prince George's County Materials Recycling Facility (MRF) sits an assortment of nonrecyclable materials that will be taken to the Brown Station Road landfill.



On display at the Prince George's County Materials Recycling Facility are some end products of the process, including plastic chips and polyester filler.



On display at the Materials Recycling Facility, a dress made of mylar and burlap (which are not recyclable at the facility but were saved from the landfill) was featured on Project Runway in 2006 in an episode titled Waste Not, Want Not.

they've seen everything from car parts to diapers to bowling balls. It is a constant problem, but he added that only about 20 percent of materials that come in to the MRF tipping floor are sent to the landfill as nonrecyclable. The industry average is around 25 percent, he noted.

Finally, the separated plastics and metals are dropped into bunkers where they are compressed and, when the correct size by weight is reached, are baled and stored until the end of the month.

Glass

Glass is handled differently. Recycled glass in the mid-Atlantic region doesn't often become new glass bottles. It's one of the materials best used as close to the source as possible, due to transportation costs. In the past, crushed glass was often used as in ingredient in aggregate, for roads, or to cap off a landfill. Currently, the MRF sends all the sorted and crushed glass to Pennsylvania-based Cap Glass Recycling. According to their website, they process glass for single-stream recycling systems by taking over more of the production of crushed glass or cullet, as well as making abrasives and filtration materials.

Marketing

While the sorting goes on, MES' recyclables marketing division handles the sale of recycled materials on a competitive basis, working with existing buyers and surveying the marketplace for new potential bidders. The baled plastics, metals and paper are generally sold on bid once a month, but MES works with some customers on a longer timeline.

Most of the paper baled at the MRF is shipped to Asia, which dominates the global pulp and paper market. Shipped via the port of Baltimore, it is the only material they export, Bell said. It's basic economic geography; the bulk of global paper pulping operations are located in Asia, and it is a relatively inexpensive material to ship. Some paper bales are held back for smaller pulping operations in Georgia and Pennsylvania. Glass, by comparison, is

heavy and expensive to ship, so it is used closer to home.

Knowing where or in what products the bales of PET or tin and steel will end up is like predicting the stock market, Bell said. The uses for PET, HDPE (high-density polyethylene, #2) or PVC (polyvinyl chloride, #3) and other plastics are widely dependent on changing global events.

Making It Easy

Ease of recycling for residents was key in Prince George's County's choice of a single-stream recycling system. Studies have shown that a simple, commingled method increases actual participation over other methods, particularly in more dense urban regions. In other counties, such as in Montgomery, a dual-stream curbside system has residents separate glass, bottles and cans from paper at the curb. In Virginia, glass is not recycled curbside; instead residents must take their glass bottles to locations with special purple bins.

Recycling Tips

Meanwhile, for residents of Greenbelt, other recycling tips the tour group picked up include:

- Put metal lids and small fish tins together in one larger can, and squeeze the top closed, which helps those smaller parts get through, instead of falling through the conveyor belts.
- Empty aerosol cans (to prevent fires in the factory) and throw away the plastic tips.
- Load shredded paper in a paper grocery bag and tape the top closed so it won't fall through the machines but will be lightweight and large enough to be sorted out with the other paper.
- Rinse cans and jars; they don't need to be squeaky clean, just rinsed, but peanut butter in plastic jars may be the exception. The purer the materials they put out for bid, the better the odds of sales, the price and the reputation of the facility for useable recycled materials. Every bit helps.

As for the perpetual statistic that only about 5 percent of plastic is recycled, consider the source (advocacy versus academic) as well as the specific material and

- Photos by Janice Wolf

geographic location - there are parts of the United States where recycling is not collected, but requires a special trip to a specific site. EPA data from 2018 claims that while the overall rate was 3 million tons for 8.7 percent, 30 percent of both PET and HDPE (#1 and #2) were recycled.

Schedule a Tour

Both the Prince George's County recycling and compost facilities welcome scheduled tours and often host school or civic groups. Tours are a good way to encourage recycling and dispel myths, says Bell. Call the MRF at 301-324-4760. Call the composting facility at 1-888-214-8687 between 8 a.m. and 3 p.m.

Venturing • Scouting America

CREW 746

www.venturecrew746.org

Co-Ed

Ages 14-21

Leadership

Adventure

Service

Community

Join Crew 746 for our Upcoming Events:

Earth Day with the City of Greenbelt

April 25th 10 am—2pm

Buddy Attick Park

Lake Clean-up and Shore Planting

Meet the Crew and Learn More about Us

Crew 746 Open House

April 26th 7—8:30 pm

Mowatt Memorial United Methodist Church, 40 Ridge Road

Meet the Crew, Learn More about Us, Fun Activities

Let Us Know You're Coming!

Email for more info:

venturecrew746@gmail.com

Fill Out the Interest Form at this link

Visit the Crew 746 Website

Visit the Crew 746 Instagram

Visit the Crew 746 Facebook

More on Recycling

Maryland Environmental Service: menv.com

Greenbelt Public Works curbside recycling flyer: tinyurl.com/dhepn8xe

EPA current national picture: tinyurl.com/5b43kszy

Earth Day

Adding Solar Panels in GHI: One Resident’s Experience

by Eric McKenzie

We installed solar panels on our Greenbelt Homes Inc. (GHI) frame home’s roof last year, and I thought I would share our experience in case it’s helpful to someone else. Our system has 10 panels that are each roughly 72” x 40”, producing up to 4.2 kW. The cost of the panels and installation was \$12,050, but our electric breaker panel needed to be upgraded too, bringing the total cost to \$14,350.

Rebates, Grants, Credits

We benefited from the 30 percent federal rebate for solar, which ended last year, unfortunately, but Maryland has a new grant program called the Maryland Solar Access Program (<https://tinyurl.com/bdhpf6n>) that provides \$750 per kW. We installed our system before that program became active, but at 4.2 kW, we could have gotten a grant of \$3,150. (Be aware that the program has a limited annual budget and is first-come-first-served, and applications must be approved before installing a system.)

Prince George’s County has an Alternative Energy Tax Credit (<https://tinyurl.com/379926tx>) for solar systems, which is the lesser of half of the cost or \$5,000. However, the program is underfunded – they told us to expect the \$5,000 credit to our property taxes beginning in fiscal year 2042.

Finally, we’re getting ongoing credits called Solar Renewable Energy Certificates (SRECs) from a Maryland program designed to encourage more renewable energy. The SRECs are based on our electricity production and currently provide us with about \$200-\$250 per year.

Our system produces enough electricity to save us about \$900 per year at current electricity prices, so together with the SRECs, we’re getting about \$1,100 per year from our solar system. Depending on what rebates, grants and credits are available, the cost of a system can be recovered reasonably quickly. Some installers also have leasing programs where you pay no money up front, though you reap fewer of the benefits over time.

Finding an Installer

To find an installer, we first signed up with Solar United Neighbors (SUN, solarunitedneighbors.org), which is a nonprofit that organizes bulk purchases for residents interested in rooftop solar. They solicit bids from different installers and get lower prices than an individual would.

Lumina was the installer company that SUN chose in 2023 and 2024. In 2023, Lumina concluded that our roof was too



PHOTO BY ERIC MCKENZIE

Solar panels are installed on a GHI frame house roof.

small to be worth their while, but they changed their mind in 2024. They did a nice job of handling the permitting paperwork and the applications to the rebate/grant/credit programs for us, though they struggled with some of GHI’s requirements and didn’t always follow up when they got stuck. I had to communicate a lot with both Lumina and GHI to push the project through.

GHI Issues

One odd problem was that Lumina needed to get into our crawlspace, but GHI left asbestos warning signs posted there “just-in-case” after they did a big asbestos cleanout program a few years ago. Of course, Lumina’s people didn’t want to go down there with those warning signs, and they canceled the project without contacting me first. I eventually got it resolved after working with them and GHI, but it was a headache.

GHI residents should be aware that GHI will want them to accept responsibility for any damage to the roof, and also to bear the cost of removing/reinstalling the panels when GHI needs to replace the roof.

For More Information

I’m happy to answer questions and can be reached at mckerih@gmail.com. We’re at 20-R Hillside Road for those who would like to take a look at the panels. For GHI residents, I have information that I can share if you start your own project, such as a copy of our GHI permit request. Going solar wasn’t easy, but I’m glad that we did it, and I hope this information helps those who are considering it.



Greenbelt Biota Explores Reflection Park for a Natural Burial Ground

by Natalie Bailey and Catherine Plaisant

What do cemeteries have to do with nature? Greenbelt’s natural history society, Greenbelt Biota, learned more on a recent visit to Reflection Park, a local natural burial ground that opened last November.

Arriving at Reflection Park’s 40-acre property in Silver Spring, members of Greenbelt Biota were ready for a morning of exploring the plants and wildlife of the forest conservation area. Some had binoculars for birding, others had plant identification books or apps on their phones. Most had their pants tucked into their socks to avoid ticks. Reflection Park Executive Director Basil Eldadah and consulting Conservation Biologist Natalie Bailey, a Greenbelter, greeted the group and shared some background about the site and its mission as an osprey soared overhead.

Sustainable Approach

Reflection Park was founded to provide people with a simple, sustainable and affordable approach to the end of life. In natural burial grounds (sometimes called green cemeteries), bodies are laid to rest in a casket, carrier or shroud made of natural, biodegradable materials. There are no concrete vaults or grave liners, and no embalming. (Cooling is an effective way to preserve bodies for several weeks.) They preserve natural spaces through burial by effectively preventing development for other uses. Certified by the Green Burial Council, Reflection Park aims to restore our relationship with the natural cycles of life, death and renewal to promote a more healthy and conscious way of living.

Reflection Park is a nonprofit, multifaith natural burial ground that opened for operations in November 2025. It can support families when they have needs for burial and can also work with

families to make arrangements before they are needed.

Along the Nature Trail

As the group headed out on their hike, they immediately noticed clusters of Virginia spring beauty flowers at the trailhead. Other spring ephemeral flowers included dwarf ginseng, jack-in-the-pulpit, mayapples and rue anemone. The group heard a pileated woodpecker drumming on trees, eastern towhees defending their territory and the call of a red-shouldered hawk. Skunk cabbage patches were leafed out all along the stream, and several species of ferns (Christmas fern, cinnamon fern and New York fern, to name a few) were unfurling all along the trail. Several kind visitors helped pull invasive garlic mustard when they saw it. Bailey shared plans for volunteer events to remove invasive plants and plant native species coming up in May in Greenbelt.

The group often paused along the trail. Biota members discussed their end-of-life choices, what they wanted or did not want. Some seemed quite prepared and shared their plans – or dilemmas – while others had not put much thought to it and found natural burials appealing because of the connection to nature – a topic dear to many Biota members. Serious conversations, but preparing for the inevitable was made more enjoyable in this bucolic setting, on a beautiful day and with friends.

Greenbelt Biota

The Greenbelt Biota is a group of people from different backgrounds and disciplines with the common goal of enjoying the flora and fauna of the Greenbelt Forest Preserve and other natural areas near Greenbelt and educating the public about the important role of urban green spaces in the conservation of biodiversity. The group uses a Facebook group

page to publicize monthly walks. The walks are selected during the Biota monthly meetings held on the second Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. on the New Deal Café patio. Most members of the group participate online by sharing photos or sightings and discussing what they found interesting in nature around Greenbelt.

See BIOTA, page 11



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Nugent & Kash named the 2026 Face of Prince George’s County Real Estate by Washingtonian Magazine.



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PHOTO BY BASIL ELDAHAD

Members of the Greenbelt Biota prepare to hit the trail after hearing a presentation about the natural burial site.

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Dr. Dianna Lee, Dr. Clayton McCarl, and Dr. Richard Duarte are licensed general dentists.

COUNCIL continued from page 1

represented less than 10 percent of the city’s cameras.

GRN doesn’t want more cameras in the city, Wilkin said, preferring the money be spent on police officer work.

GRN participant Diana McFadden worried that, in the current political climate, the federal government might access the city’s surveillance data, especially facial recognition, involving the police department in exploitation and political targeting. Bowers answered that neither LPRs, speed, stop-sign nor red-light cameras have facial recognition capabilities.

Purpose and Procedures

LPRs are intended to help prevent and reduce crime, to keep stolen vehicles out of the city and support criminal investigations, Bowers said. In addition to LPRs, the city owns red light cameras on main roads, and speed cameras at numerous sites, especially near the high school, and six stop-sign cameras. 136 security cameras also operate throughout the city.

LPRs and “context” cameras are online at six sites with six cameras yet to be installed (see map for proposed locations).

Maryland state law limits use of traffic enforcement camera data to traffic enforcement purposes. If any police department needs the data for another purpose, they must subpoena the vendor, explained Bowers.

The National Crime Information Center maintains a hot list, updated by the state every six hours, against which tag numbers captured by LPRs can be checked. A human must verify a hit.

Data Storage Differences

LPR data is stored within the camera for under 24 hours, then is transferred to the Maryland Coordination and Analysis Center (MCAC). Police have “live-view” capability, but for subsequent investigations they must request the data from MCAC, and such requests are audited and tracked.

Context cameras photograph vehicles and store data for up to 30 days. If full, the camera offloads the data into secure cloud storage. The police own and have sole access to the data, which is deleted after 30 days unless saved in a separate evidence storage system. MCAC guidelines allow other agencies to request data, but access is limited, logged and audited.

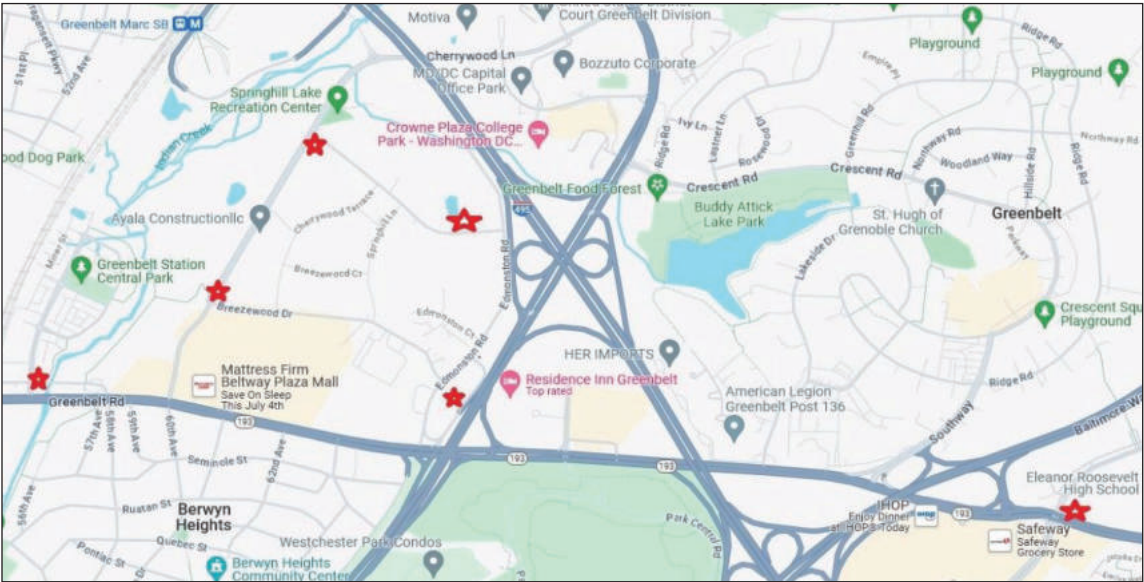
No Facial Recognition

The cameras recognize motion inside vehicles but not individual faces. Even that picture is not very clear; technology that might make it clearer is disabled and control is accessible only to high-ranking officers.

Maryland law requires that LPR data be used only for legitimate law enforcement purposes. Installation in a public place doesn’t require a prior warrant and has been found constitutional. Also, vehicle tags are neither personal property nor private.

ACAPS

After council authorized use of LPRs 18 months ago, the Advisory Committee Advancing Public Safety (ACAPS) worked with Greenbelt Police on implementation. Peggy Higgins, ACAPS chair, explained the interaction and addressed GRN’s concerns, recalling that ACAPS had raised similar concerns about data collection, storage, security and use. “Our committee worked to bal-



Proposed possible locations for license plate reader cameras. Chief Bowers says deployment plans are guided by analyzing crime data and patterns to ensure fair and equitable use.

ance Greenbelt’s values of civic engagement and respect for civil rights with the serious safety problem residents are having with car theft.”

With many other cameras already deployed throughout Greenbelt, ACAPS unanimously supported the police general order on LPRs, which included three of their concerns with the fourth left to council oversight.

Usefulness of Cameras

Bowers noted a seasonal uptick in vehicle crime and gave examples of the usefulness of LPR live data, including solving a homicide case, locating a missing elderly person and closing a burglary case.

With money saved from the original \$174,000 allotment, police can install additional LPRs in commercial areas subject to vehicle crime, especially at night. These funds would not go far in hiring police officers.

Bowers recommended LPRs for their efficiency, effectiveness and usefulness as part of an officers’ toolkit. He gave assurance that rules are in place to secure data, prevent unauthorized access and prevent sharing with federal immigration, the latter being forbidden by city code.

Councilmember Frankie Fritz asked if Greenbelt shares data with Prince George’s County, which envisions a countywide, centralized database, and Bowers replied that the county can make a request to MCAC to get Greenbelt data.

When Councilmember Kristen Weaver asked which types of cameras are limited to school zones, Bowers explained state law says speed cameras can be placed in residential or school zones, and all Greenbelt speed cameras are in school zones.

Councilmember Amy Knesel voiced opposition to increased surveillance in the city. “There is no data that says LPRs actually reduce violent crime whatsoever. ... I’m (also) extremely concerned about continued placement of cameras in primarily rental and minority-majority neighborhoods,” she said.

Councilmember Jenni Pompei asked how stop-sign cameras operate. Bowers said stop-sign cameras record the image of the vehicle passing through and determine its speed. By Greenbelt’s threshold, lower than 4 mph is considered a stop. Violations are sent to officers for review. In the first six days the cameras were operational, they identified 16,000 potential violations (for more on the stop sign cameras see the

April 2 issue).

City Manager Josué Salmerón described several city intervention strategies over the last year to encourage stop-sign compliance, saying violations are going down. With city outreach plus fines, violations should drop significantly.

Councilmember Danielle McKinney asked how placement is determined and Bowers explained that any information-automated enforcement tries to target areas with problems. He said LPR locations are based on crime statistics, repeat offenders and crime patterns by area.

Councilmember Silke Pope asked for assurance that the city is putting only Greenbelt-owned cameras on Greenbelt streets, which Bowers confirmed.

In conclusion Bowers said, “Enforcement is obviously very important when it comes to traffic safety. ... I understand we all find these (cameras) annoying, but hopefully we’ll all learn the lesson very quickly and this will not be an issue.”

“Enforcement is one side... Engineering is just as much a problem ... a lot of these roads are not under our direct control. These roads are not designed to be pedestrian-safe. ... A lot of times the people who face the largest disparities are the ones who don’t benefit from that enhanced pedestrian infrastructure and those investments. So, this is about saving lives. This (surveillance cameras) is not a replacement for good engineering, either. These two things need to work in tandem.”

More Resident Concerns

Several residents expressed concern about trade-offs between crime prevention/security and privacy/liberty, and the federal government’s lack of respect for persons’ rights and privacy.

Bowers expressed confidence in state employees at MCAC and

in guardrails that are in place at all levels to keep data secure and private, saying he doesn’t “believe that at any point any employees of MCAC, who are generally state employees themselves, are going to violate state law; and there is an annual audit that’s submitted to MCAC by any agency that houses their own data.”

One questioner was concerned about artificial intelligence (AI), to which Bowers responded that no AI is built into the system, and matches are reviewed by a police officer.

Another resident was concerned about potential for abuse as technology rapidly advances, saying technology can change for the worse, unnoticed. Two residents expressed concern about placement in poorer parts of the city and associated financial and psychological consequences. Yet another asked about the directions cameras face – Bowers said they photograph the rear of the car and its license plate after the car has sped past.

Another resident, a firm believer in this technology, said the tools help Greenbelt officers in protecting the community and giving up a tiny bit of privacy is worth the reduction in crime

McKinney said it may make sense at this time to consider needs to update the data privacy governance policy in coordination with police department policies.

Lesley Kash contributed to this article.



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LILLY ELECTRIC

SKOLNIK continued from page 1

Editor Mary Lou Williamson today remembers a rule change making multiple persons eligible. In addition to her newspaper work, Elaine served on the Park and Recreation Advisory Board and as Co-op Nursery School president. She was active in the movement to preserve Greenbelt as a planned community during the 1970s and early 1980s when the city endured many development issues. She also worked behind the scenes for city council and GHI board candidates, organizing GHI court captains to ensure voter turnout. Spending hours on the phone from her 474-6060 phone number, she became known as Agent 60. Williamson remembers Elaine as a champion arm-twister, saying, “You’d go to the office to do one thing” and end up with several more to do.

Next Chapters

In 1977, her world collapsed when Al died of a heart attack, possibly contributed to by the legal battle. But she had great reserves of strength and perseverance and reluctantly became the president of the News Review for nine years. She became a guru on sewage treatment when Greenbriar was built during a 1970-1977 sewer moratorium. She took pride in unbiased, factual reporting, and lawyers and developers noted her fairness, sensitivity and caring. By 1986, Elaine had moved



PHOTO BY ERICA JOHNS

The memorial plaque on Elaine’s pink dogwood tree reads “Elaine Skolnik Nicholson, 1925–2021, News Review 1955–2014, First Amendment Champion.”

from Greenbelt and married Victor Nicholson, who drove her to the News Review office every Tuesday. Vic died in 2005 and Elaine in 2021.

In Memoriam

Former editor Harry Zubkoff once wrote, “The News Review is the major unifying element within the city, the force which has done more than any other single civic activity to make a city out of a housing project.” Today many residents of Greenbelt are unfamiliar with Elaine’s and Al’s achievements. But without their leadership, the News Review might not have survived and maintained its decades-long influence. We are grateful for their examples and honor their service.

BIOTA continued from page 9

At the end of the walk, small groups wandered between the first burial sites of Reflection Park. The sites appear as mounds covered with evergreen branches. To honor specific religious practices, the park includes three sections: Peace (open to all religious, spiritual and nonaffiliated traditions); Shalom (for Jewish families, with the grave foot pointing to Jerusalem); and Salaam (for Muslim families, with the grave site facing Mecca).

Reflection Park’s website

(reflectionpark.org) provides more information, and the Silver Spring burial site is open to the public from 8:30 a.m. to sunset every day. Anyone is welcome to explore the forested trail, rest by the stream and enjoy the beauty of the site. The Greenbelt Biota page is facebook.com/groups/greenbeltbiota.

Natalie Bailey is a Greenbelter and contractor at Reflection Park Natural Burial Ground and Catherine Plaisant coordinates the monthly walks of the Greenbelt Biota.



PHOTO BY ANGELA BUCKLEY

Thank you to the Greenbelt Public Works for providing beautiful spring garden arrangements around town to brighten up our wonderful community.

ELECTION continued from page 1

needs to change.” White, a retired social worker/disaster responder with the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, described caring for immigrant children and his demotion for defying orders during Trump’s first term. He is one of 300,000 federal workers who have left during Trump’s second term. “The federal government is the lifeblood of employment and the foundation of middle-class success in Prince George’s County,” he said, and new laws are needed “to make sure career positions are not politicized.”

Questions for Candidates

1) Would you accept donations from AIPAC (the American Israel Public Affairs Committee)?

All candidates present denied taking donations from AIPAC or any other large corporate donors.

Hedgepeth and White both noted that while they won’t accept AIPAC money, Glenn Ivey does, saying AIPAC is his biggest funder.

2) With a Republican majority in the House, how will you work across the aisle? What steps should the party take?

Opinions differed, with Gomes emphasizing cooperation, Hedgepeth open to specific collaborations, and Johnson and White focused on constituent concerns and progressive goals.

Johnson said bipartisanship for its own sake just moves Democrats further to the right, believing it better to co-govern with the people.

White said Republicans win because Democratic leaders are weak, so it is time to abolish seniority and have new leaders.

Gomes said that Democrats and Republicans must come together for the good of the citizens.

Hedgepeth said bipartisan support has accomplished immigration reform and some other important changes. New approaches should include ending continuing resolutions and focusing on community project funding.

3) How will you prioritize spending our resources?

White said the problem is revenue, not spending, because we don’t tax the wealthy. Agencies need to be rebuilt to serve people’s needs.

Gomes wants to focus on young people and education.

Hedgepeth said federal dollars are available if needs are addressed creatively, for example using the land around Metro transit facilities for housing.

Johnson said that first, Citizens United must be overturned and second, tax the wealthy. Only then will the government respond to the people.

4) How can you ensure continued contact with constituents?

Gomes said he would focus on family and community.

Hedgepeth emphasized her constituent council of 15 residents across the district, her constituent dashboard reporting specific actions and town halls for in-person accountability.

Johnson recommended town halls with unfiltered questions at least once a quarter.

White said accountability means honesty, following through and not giving the privileged access.

5) How do you feel about and work with different wings of the Democratic party, moderate and progressive alike? Would you vote

for impeachment and could you work with the other side?

Hedgepeth suggested being realistic about what can actually be achieved, promoting progressive ideas and leveraging fatigue among Republicans.

Johnson and White saw no realistic strategy for impeachment with so much allegiance to the president but still, Democrats must bring articles of impeachment for every violation.

Gomes said members of government should listen to each other and the citizens and compromise.

6) If one of you becomes the clear front runner, will the others drop out to improve chances against Ivey?

All the candidates present agreed to step aside and support the most likely competitor. Hedgepeth cautioned, however, that the Democratic party’s influence and outcomes can be unclear.

7) Congress has oversight of ICE and their activities and warehouses. What would you do to get ICE off the streets?

Hedgepeth would abolish ICE, but moreover, address the origins of the problem growing out of fear, and make sure people can live here with dignity.

Johnson said ICE has ravaged our communities in extreme human rights violations so ICE must be abolished along with other government enablers.

White recommended that immigration courts should be real courts and state attorneys general should prosecute federal violations.

Gomes said that ICE must work in a disciplined way, not with inhumane treatment.

8) Many questions showed concern about vulnerable people, including Lebanese, Ukrainian, LGBTQ+, neurodivergent or any person wanting security and dignity, as well as those worried about AI affecting jobs or society. People are struggling and how can we help them?

Johnson said government’s role

is to make people’s lives better, including raising the minimum wage and providing universal comprehensive health care, not funding wars.

White said a \$27 minimum wage, free health care, free trade school and accessible housing could be funded by taking back what billionaires have looted. It is all made worse by the anti-DEI assault on rights, he said.

Gomes said people who are struggling deserve respect and a happy life, and the government needs to pay attention to those needing help the most.

Hedgepeth said that, as human beings, we have to protect the most vulnerable. She felt Maryland has done a pretty good job but with problems like health care deserts and food deserts, solutions have to be well planned and executed.

Closing Statements

White said this election can change things, in conjunction with protesting and community efforts.

Johnson asked the audience to remember which candidates did not show up, and to consider who will actually fight for the people and future generations.

Hedgepeth warned that restoring what has been lost will not be easy or fast, but community is the end game.

Gomes said he will work to give opportunities for children and working people who are struggling.

Primary Significance

In the November 3 general election, the winner of this Democratic primary will probably prevail over the Republican opponent, given District 4’s deep-blue voting history. With all 435 House seats up for election, the nationwide November election will affect the partisan balance, currently very close, of the 120th Congress.



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Wilma the Wombat
Photo by Andy Carruthers

Letters continued from page 2

equity but amounts to the appearance of continued discriminatory practices in one specific part of our city.

I ask the police department, city manager and council to respond to this inquiry within the month so that all residents can be informed of the basis for the placement of additional speed cameras in Greenbelt West.

Lois Rosado

Questions Unneeded Procedures

I am writing in response to the News Review article in the April 2 issue.

Recently while seeing a local physician I complained of leg pains and swelling; he referred me to Center for Vein Restoration (CVR) in the same building, and told me I could go that same day. I took the referral and went home, deciding that was not what I needed.

Soon afterward, checking my Medicare Summary Notices (MSNs), I noticed that CVR had charged Medicare for visits I had never made. I called Medicare to report this and also the referring doctor's office to complain.

I think this is an example of the fraud that's adding to our medical costs going up, and a good reason to be diligent in checking the MSNs and other medical insurance paperwork.

Katy Pape

Home Sweet Nest

Greenbelt's Repair Café lifted my "bird-en." Last fall, two beloved birdhouses in my front garden that I purchased 25 years ago at a Greenbelt Art Fair sadly toppled over from old age. The houses had been drilled into the handle of an antique pitchfork that could no longer withstand the weather elements. I was heart-broken. I could not remember the artist who first created them, neither did I have a drill to make the necessary holes for a new pole that I purchased from Home Depot.

Greenbelt Repair Café to the rescue! On Saturday morning, April 18, I took my new pole and birdhouses to the offices of the Greenbelt MakerSpace and Tool Library. Less than an hour later, I emerged with a beautiful feathery fixer-upper thanks to craftsman Clive Jerram and his skill and patience. As soon as I got home, I placed my refurbished birdhouses in my front garden and less than 24 hours later two sparrows were already moving in. Needless to say, my heart took flight.

Thank you, Greenbelt Repair Café.

Sharon J. Anderson



Sharon Anderson's toppled birdhouses from last fall



Clive Jerram at work
- Photos by Sharon Anderson



Clive Jerram proudly displays the completed repair.



The birdhouses reinstalled and ready for occupancy

Art Reception April 26

On display now through Saturday, May 2, the New Deal Café has an exhibit titled Viewpoint in a Circle featuring entirely new work from artist Eileen Murray-Kraft.

Over the past two years, Murray-Kraft has created a wide array of collages using a unique medium: six-inch circular watercolor card stock. Her artistic process evolved to fit the compact space of her GHI "cottage," demonstrating adaptability and creativity. Her creations draw inspiration from the natural world, everyday items and the dynamic relationships between colors and textures found in her environment. Murray-Kraft's passion for trying out different materials and techniques keeps her art vibrant and ever-changing.

The public is invited to a reception with the artist on Sunday, April 26 from 1 to 3 p.m. Come meet the artist and enjoy light refreshments.

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Police Blotter

Incidents reported here occurred April 13 - 19, 2026. Readers are encouraged to contact the police if they have information that may aid in an inquiry. Call the non-emergency number 301-474-7200 or email pd@greenbeltnmd.gov. Times provided are when the incidents were reported.

Incident Summary

Greenbelt Police reported three domestic incidents, one leading to arrest, and three mental health diversions, one involving attempted suicide.

Police resolved two missing persons cases.

Someone found a firearm and turned it in.

Armed Robbery

On April 13 at 2:02 p.m. near 6000 Greenbelt Road, a man entered a store to settle a dispute regarding his account and became upset. He made verbal threats, then produced a knife and took cash from the register. He engaged in a verbal altercation with security officers, and was arrested.

On April 17 at 6:37 p.m. near 6000 Breezewood Drive, a man received non-life-threatening injuries, and his wallet and cell phone were taken. Officers found and arrested one of three suspects.

On April 18 at 4:55 p.m. near Ridge Road and Ivy Lane, a man was robbed at gunpoint and his wallet was taken. Suspects were said to have fled in a vehicle toward Crescent Road.

On April 18 at 5:30 p.m. near 6109 Breezewood Court, a man received non-life-threatening injuries from three men and his wallet and money were taken.

Assault

On April 16 at 5:23 p.m. near 7500 Hanover Parkway, someone was injured during a fight between co-workers.

On April 17 at 10:47 a.m. near 7601 Hanover Parkway, an assault took place between two students.

On April 18 at 10:36 p.m. near 6002 Greenbelt Road, witnesses saw a man walk by a minor with disabilities and kick him. No injuries were sustained.

Indecent Exposure

On April 15 at 11:44 p.m. near 6207 Springhill Court, a man in a hallway exposed himself. A neighbor had a video which led to the man's arrest.

Threats

On April 13 near 143 Westway, a woman received threats from an acquaintance calling from private numbers, and whom she believes made a fake Facebook account impersonating her.

DUI Arrests

On April 13 at 2:01 a.m. near Kenilworth Avenue, an officer witnessed a Subaru commit multiple traffic violations. The driver was charged with DUI.

On April 13 at 10:55 p.m. near 25 Ridge Road, a Dodge struck a parked vehicle and was trying to leave the scene. The driver was found behind the wheel and was arrested for DUI.

On April 17 at 7:26 p.m. near Greenbelt Road, a Chevy pickup truck was rear-ended by a Honda Civic. The Honda driver sustained injuries and admitted to having had a few drinks earlier. She was taken to a nearby hospital and charged with DUI.

On April 18 at 11:34 p.m. near 9141 Springhill Lane, a driver struck two parked vehicles before stopping on the sidewalk. The driver left but later returned, and was charged with DUI.

Fraud

On April 16 near 7900 Good Luck Road, an employee found a card skimmer at the point of sale.

Stolen Items Found

On April 14 at 4:29 p.m. near 7800 Walker Drive, an officer found multiple cash drawers and a safe, confirmed by Laurel Police and Bowie Police as stolen from their jurisdictions.

Theft and Shoplifting

On the morning of April 14 near 6100 Greenbelt Road, three women were detained on suspicion of multiple prior thefts. They were identified, charged with criminal citation for theft, and issued trespass notices banning them from the mall.

On April 15 at 8:17 p.m. near 7573 Greenbelt Road, two men stole from a retail store and left in a gray Mazda.

On April 16 at 4:38 p.m. near 6000 Greenbelt Road, security camera footage showed a woman taking five miscellaneous items.

On April 17 at 9:43 p.m. near 6100 Greenbelt Road, a shoplifter became disorderly, refused to stop and tried to flee but was captured, charged and taken to the Hyattsville jail.

Trespassing

On April 17 at 2:29 p.m. near 5510 Cherrywood Lane, a man who is known to officers was banned after he was found to be trespassing on Beltway Plaza property. He was released on a criminal citation.

Vandalism

On April 13 near Crescent Road and Greenhill Road, the speed camera was vandalized with graffiti.

On April 14 at 5:26 p.m. near 446 Ridge Road, someone heard a loud pop in their son's room. They observed drywall dust on the bed and a hole in the ceiling, confirmed as a bullet hole.

Vehicle Crimes

Stolen Vehicles

Three vehicles were stolen:

on April 15 near 7804 Hanover Parkway, a white 2019 Toyota Highlander (Md. 5GL9780); on April 16 near 5919 Cherrywood Terrace, a silver 2007 Honda Accord (Md. 7GX3686); and on April 17 near 6998 Hanover Parkway, a 2021 Toyota Highlander (Md. 4EZ7567).

Stolen Vehicle Recovered

On April 14 near 7100 Greenbelt Road, officers found a 2019 Honda Accord without registration plates and a smashed window, reported stolen from New Carrollton.

On April 18 near Ora Glen Drive and Frankfort Drive, a 2022 Acura MDX, reported stolen the previous night, was found stripped of parts.

Theft from Auto

All four wheels were stolen from two Toyota Camrys: a 2025 on April 14 near 7702 Hanover Parkway, and a 2026 on April 16 near 7700 Hanover Parkway.

On April 17 near 8150 Lakecrest Drive a disability placard was stolen.

On April 18 near 7730 Hanover Parkway, a vehicle tag was stolen.

Vandalism to Auto

On April 15, two Toyota Highlanders had windows broken: a 2019 near 7726 Hanover Parkway, and a 2019 near 7724 Hanover Parkway.

On April 17 near 58 Ridge Road, a vehicle had a window broken.

On April 18 near 6221 Springhill Court, an officer found a Honda Accord parked with the driver's-side door open, a window smashed and ransacked.

On April 18 near 9114 Edmonston Court, a 2015 Chrysler 300 was ransacked, and a window broken.

City Council Moves Toward Unionization for Public Works

by Larry Beyna

On April 13 the Greenbelt City Council, chaired by Mayor Pro Tem Kristen Weaver, continued deliberations related to the potential unionization of Public Works employees.

During the Petitions and Requests part of the agenda, resident and Public Works employee Michael Canavan spoke about possible unionization. Canavan stated that “a number of employees have already expressed their support for a union by signing ‘union authorization cards.’ Rather than proceeding with a formal election process, employees respectfully request that these signed authorization cards be used to determine whether there is sufficient support for union recognition.”

Canavan noted that, because of past intimidation, a real concern is that an election period would create unnecessary stress for some employees, whereas the authorization cards already reflect individuals’ voluntary and informed decisions. “Accordingly,” Canavan said, “we ask that the council recognize a collective bargaining agent once a majority of employees have demonstrated their support through signed authorization cards.”

Two other residents at the meeting and one resident who spoke online supported Canavan’s request. Another resident, recorded by the city as John Berry, wearing a UFCW Local 1994 shirt, raised concerns about misinformation about authorization cards but his comments were inaudible in the recording of the meeting.

Later in the meeting, council returned to the topic of collective bargaining and unionization, by reviewing first a proposed Charter Amendment and then proposed changes to the Labor Code ordinance dealing with collective bargaining.

Charter Amendment

The proposed charter amendment discussed by council reads: “To recognize and engage in collective bargaining with one or more designated bargaining

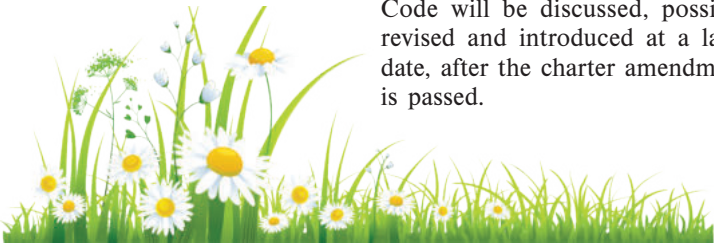
representatives of all full-time non-exempt, non-managerial, non-confidential employees of the City of Greenbelt (hereinafter ‘Covered Employees’) in one of three distinct bargaining units as follows: a) Sworn Police Officers; b) Covered Employees working in the Department of Public Works and c) Covered employees working in all other Departments of the City, to enter into binding collective bargaining agreements with said representatives; and to enact by ordinance or amendment a system of rules and regulations to govern this process. The City Council shall approve all collective bargaining agreements entered into by the city with collective bargaining representatives prior to their becoming effective. In the event the parties negotiating a collective bargaining agreement are unable to reach agreement on one or more terms of a collective bargaining agreement, the City Council shall have the authority to set those terms and conditions of employment that remain in dispute upon a majority vote.”

Some issues and language still need to be resolved with advice from the city’s legal team – e.g., the definition of “full-time” (vs. part-time) staff. The proposed amendment will be on the agenda at council’s April 27 meeting.

Labor Code

Council also reviewed a draft of changes to Article VIII, Labor Code, which is the detailed ordinance on collective bargaining that would implement the proposed charter amendment mentioned above. Councilmember Frankie Fritz objected to a section of the draft ordinance changes that would prohibit strikes by employees whose jobs have nothing to do with public safety, such as recreation staff, art instructors and so on. According to Fritz, prohibiting those employees from striking would violate their right to free association, so this section needs more discussion and possibly a vote to exclude the prohibition.

The draft changes to the Labor Code will be discussed, possibly revised and introduced at a later date, after the charter amendment is passed.





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A frog rests on a fence rail.

PHOTO BY NICK HALL NH

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FOUND – License plate on 4/13/26 by a road in old Greenbelt. Send tag number to Basilandcake-email@yahoo.com to be reunited.

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RATES

CLASSIFIED: \$4.00 minimum for 15 words. \$1 for each 1-5 additional words. Submit ad with payment to the News Review office by 6 p.m. Tuesday, or to the News Review drop box in the Co-op grocery store before 5 p.m. Tuesday, or mail to 15 Crescent Rd., Suite 100, Greenbelt, MD 20770.

BOXED: \$11.50/column inch. Minimum 1.5 inches (\$17.25). Deadline 2 p.m. Monday for ads that need to be set up, including those needing clip art and/or borders. 6 p.m. Tuesday for camera-ready ads. Certs and Notarizations each \$10.

NEEDED: Please include name, phone number and address with ad copy. Ads not considered accepted until published.

DROP ads and payments in the mail slot in the exterior door of the News Review office. The door is located to the left of the main entrance on the east side of the Community Center (side closest to Roosevelt Center and the Municipal Building).

ZELLE: The News Review is now accepting electronic payments through Zelle. Find out more at zellepay.com. Customers should direct their payments to business@greenbeltnewsreview.com.

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PHOTO BY JOHN BETHEL

The Bethels of Berwyn Heights hold the News Review at the Santa Monica Pier after driving Route 66 from Chicago, Ill., to Santa Monica, Calif. Pictured are Sarah Wire (behind), Tommy Bethel (left) and Robbie Bethel (right).



PHOTO COURTESY DEBBIE ASHPES

Emerson Gary and her aunt Debbie Ashpes took the News Review with them when they visited Edinburgh, Scotland.

Spellman Overpass Resistance Fridays

Join the weekly protest on Spellman Overpass, Fridays (except in rain, wind or snow) from 3:30 until 5:30ish. Flags and big-letter messages are provided to cheerfully encourage Parkway motorists' awareness. To minimize driver distraction, extra signage is discouraged.

Access from Gardenway or from the Eleanor Roosevelt High School crosswalk. Questions? Email kashla@pm.me.



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DATA CENTERS continued from page 7

home to roost in regions where hundreds of data centers are located in one watershed. The second-largest concentration of data centers in the U.S., in Arizona, is already straining the Phoenix area's limited water supply. A similar story is playing out in parts of Texas, where affordable energy is thought to be more plentiful than the water that the data centers demand.

NoVa Data Center Market

Between water availability and access to affordable power, Northern Virginia remains both the largest and fastest-growing data center market in the world. The total square footage of those facilities was five times greater in 2023 than it was in 2015, according to the Northern Virginia Technology Council. An industry-run data center map of the region showed it had about 370 data centers either in operation or under construction by mid-2025.

The vast majority of those data centers are concentrated in the Potomac River basin, where water supplies have been sufficient so far but are still subject to droughts and other stressors. Forecasters say that data centers will be one of those stressors in the near future.

Because the water use of individual centers is typically not made public, Alimatou Seck, a senior water resources scientist at the Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin, worked with water suppliers to calculate average and cumulative consumption. Seck found that data centers in the region currently consume about 2 percent of the water used from the Potomac River basin. That number shoots up to 8 percent during the summer. If the industry continues to grow at an unconstrained pace using standard cooling technologies, she projected that the amount could surpass 33 percent by 2050, requiring 200 million gallons of Potomac water per day. For context, the District of Columbia metropolitan area currently uses a maximum of about 600 million gallons per day from the Potomac at the peak of water use in August.

"We don't know what will happen with energy or regulatory pressure, but it's an issue we will have to follow closely in the future," said Seck, whose initial findings are still under review and being circulated among stakeholders for feedback.

She pointed out that the numbers do not include water use for power-generating plants, which can be an additional large category of growth related to the industry. Data center companies are increasingly looking to nuclear energy as a cleaner source of energy that can also fuel the industry's rapid growth. But nuclear power plants, like data centers, also need to be kept cool. To do that, they use large quantities of water.

Whitney Pipkin is a Bay Journal staff writer based in Virginia. The Bay Journal is published by a nonprofit news organization providing independent reporting on environmental news and issues in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.



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3-br on large corner lot, garage available. Corner lot, hardwood flooring.

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Earth Day

Campfire at Greenbelt Park

Park Rangers hosted a campfire presentation about caterpillars on the evening of Saturday, April 18 at Greenbelt Park, a hidden gem of the National Park Service here in Greenbelt.



A child gets a piggy back ride.

- Photos by Nick Hall NH for NPS

Arbor Day Celebration



Greenbelt acknowledges Arbor Day, traditionally celebrated with tree-planting.

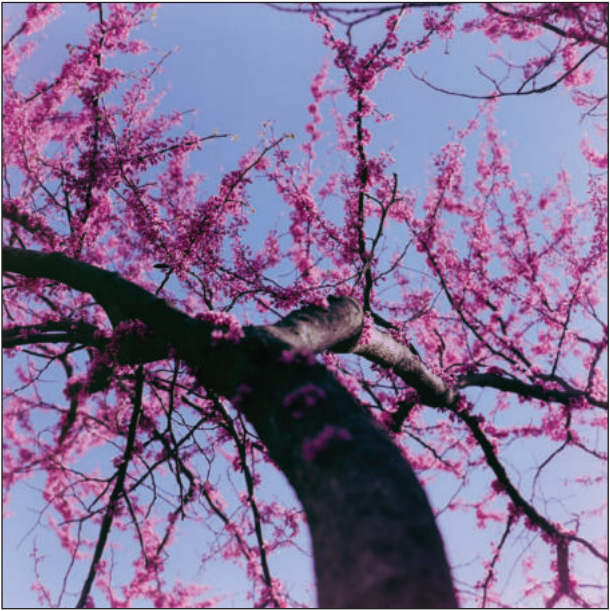
- Photos by Carol Griffith



A child and an adult point at a nearby tree that matches a description given by the Park Ranger.



An adult raises his hand in response to a Park Ranger's question.



A redbud tree at Greenbelt Lake

- Photos by Nick Hall NH



A cherry tree in bloom at Greenbelt Lake